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UNCLAS COLOMBO 001459

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: LTTE SUSPECT ARRESTED IN MURDER OF POLICE  
SUPERINTENDENT

REF: COLOMBO 1374

11. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) cadre "Gopi" was arrested following a gun battle on August 17, in Jaffna during a joint security forces operation for the August 5 murder of the police superintendent. The gun fight slightly wounded one officer and mortally wounded another. A heavy security force presence remains in the area today to prevent rioting, similar to the riot that claimed the life of the Jaffna police superintendent on August 5.

12. (U) Local constabulary and national Criminal Investigation Division (CID) officers supported by the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) were conducting a cordon and search operation. As police approached the house of a suspect in the murder of the Jaffna police superintendent (Reftel A), they came under fire from suspected LTTE cadres. After the gunmen fled the scene, police arrested the suspect and evacuated the two wounded officers.

13. (SBU) The LTTE website TamilNet identified the suspect as "Gopi", a financial officer in the political wing of the LTTE. Other sources in Jaffna said he was an intelligence operative. The LTTE has filed a complaint with the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM). These same sources said that on the night of Gopi's arrest, LTTE cadres spread word that there would be a protest the following day. Because of the close proximity to Jaffna University, security forces have deployed in the tense neighborhood in order to forestall a riot.  
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